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ONE TIME ONLY

In the Scriptures we can read of at least seven instances that Jesus healed the blind. One instance was in Bethsaida. (Mark 8:22-26). This incident is unusual because it is the only instance we have of a progressive miracle. We do not know why Jesus acted differently this time. We only know that in other cases His cures are complete and done at once.

The account in Mark says that Jesus first put saliva on the man's eyes and then asked him what he could see.

The blind man's response showed that he was somewhat confused. "I see men as trees, walking."

Jesus touched the man's eyes again, with this result: "He was restored, and saw every man clearly."

We see that Jesus healed the man gradually, or, in stages. Why? The Bible does not fully answer, but we can assume several possible explanations. Beginning to see after being blind for many years takes a major adjustment. For example: pit ponies were once kept in mines to work. They became so accustomed to the dark that when they came above ground they needed as long as a full day to adjust to daylight. With blindness, the adjustment would be even greater.

With today's advances in surgery, doctors have, in a few instances, been able to repair mechanical problems in the eyes of the blind, restoring the eyes' ability to see. However, the patients have often been overwhelmed by the flood of information coming from their eyes to their brain. Baffled by a world of color, shape, and perspective, they have found themselves confused and unable to recognize objects. Over time, the brain

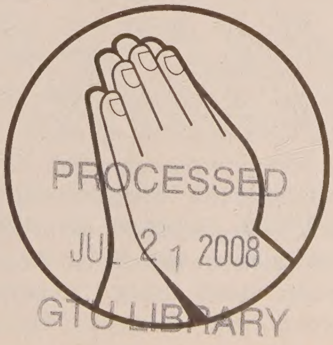
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EXOTIC OR SIMPLE

Many assume that the Jesus Prayer is used by practicing Orthodox Christians exclusively. In fact, some of those attracted to the Jesus Prayer are not practicing Christians at all. What has sparked their interest is that the Jesus Prayer seems so exotic, fresh and exciting compared to the regular prayers of the church. Others are attracted to it by having studied some non-Christian religions and thinking – at last a Christian mantra!

But a house cannot be built without foundations. Neither can a prayer life. Under normal circumstances, a balanced and regular sacramental life is a sine qua non for anyone practicing the Prayer. The invocation of the name is not a substitute for the Eucharist but an added enrichment. As Bishop Justin has said: "The surest way to union with the Lord next to Communion of His Flesh and Blood, is the inner Jesus Prayer."

Because it is so short and so simple, the Jesus Prayer can be recited at any time and in any place. It can be said while we are waiting for the bus or elevator, when we are working in the garden or kitchen, when we cannot sleep, at moments of distress or mental stress when other forms of prayer are impossible. It is a prayer which is well suited for our hurry-up, busy, stressful lives. "Jesus son of God, have mercy on me a sinner."



ST. PANTELEIMON
July 27/August 9

The martyr Panteleimon, whose name means "ALL MERCIFUL," lived in the fourth century in Nicodemia, Asia Minor. He was known for using both science and divine intervention to heal the sick. Like St. Luke of the New Testament, St. Panteleimon was a doctor and was well known. He was referred to as a "glorious physician." But unlike St. Luke, who attained sainthood through evangelism, he received his through his talents as a physician.

As word of his great skill spread, so did jealousy. Angered by his growing good reputation, rival doctors eventually denounced him as a Christian. When he was asked to choose between Christ and the Emperor Maximilian, St. Panteleimon chose Christ. He was sentenced to death. Still in his early 30s in 305, he was bound, tortured and beheaded.

But his death didn't put a stop to his work as healer. According to Orthodox teaching, the relics of saints bear witness of their saintliness through all eternity. By praying before the relics, their ikons, and kissing the containers that encase them, we can communicate with those who are already dwelling in heaven. We believe that the saints can intercede and plead to God for those still on earth. Because St. Panteleimon was a doctor, his relics are believed to be endowed with special healing powers.

Listen carefully, you will hear St. Panteleimon's name invoked in the prayers at the blessing of water and oil along with St. Hermolaus and the other unmercenaries who healed without pay.

"Panteleimon: Remember us who in faith honor your memory. That we

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CHRONOLOGY

JULY 2008

DIED: Fr. Kovalchuk (Patriarchal Church) in Youngstown, Ohio

IN AMERICA, YOUNG ADULTS are leaving the church in great numbers, according to LifeWay Research. Twenty percent who attended church services during high school planned to take a break once they graduated from high school. Reasons given: 25% gave transitioning into college, 23% blamed work responsibilities, 22% gave distance from church.

OLD WIRELESS PHONES are needed by advocacy agencies, police depts. and others to reprogram and provide free emergency airtime to people who fear domestic violence. Have your church group provide a drop-off point for these phones. For info: www.wirelessfoundation.org

PASSPORTS ARE NO LONGER NEEDED by some former Soviet Union block country members. They can travel throughout the EU countries freely. However, EU countries still have border guards on the borders of Belarus, Ukraine, and Serbia.

BILINGUAL PEOPLE LOSE THEIR "MENTAL EDGE" at a lower rate than do monolinguals. According to a study at York University in Toronto, "Bilingual people are always presented with two language options, and their brain must decide the right language to speak in reply. 'Over time, these mental gymnastics protect the brain by hindering the natural slowdown of the executive processes that occurs with age'."

A NEW ANGLICAN PRAYER BOOK, "The Pocket Prayers for Peace and Justice," has changes which some call a travesty. For example: "from the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread," now reads "You are giving us our daily bread when we manage to get back our lands or get a fairer wage." Also, the 23rd Psalm reads: "Even if a full scale violent confrontation breaks out I will not be afraid. Lord," for "yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death."

ALL PARISHES OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC ARCHEPARCHY OF PHILADELPHIA now celebrate the three sacraments (Mysteries) of Initiation – Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist at one time. Triple immersion will also be the norm. "This is being done so that our church may recover its Eastern liturgical authenticity, according to the tradition which we have inherited from the Apostles through the Church Fathers."

THE STREET SIGN "Saint Alexander Hotovitsky Way" has been erected at the corner of Washington and Grand in Jersey City, NJ.

THE CLERGY WIVES' RETREAT will be held from September 25 to 28 at SS Martha and Mary Monastery, 65 Spinner Ln., PO Box 70, Wagener, SC 29164. Call 865/660-6438 or e-mail beth@senes.com for info.

READINGS OF INSPIRATIONAL STORIES are broadcast Saturdays (9 a.m. and 7 p.m. ET) and Thursdays (7 p.m. ET) on http://www.ancientfaithradio.com or download the podcast for free at any time. This is a special radio program for Orthodox children.

ORTHODOX HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE UNREST IN KENYA. The Church of the Holy Virgin in Nakuru has been completely destroyed. Many homes of Orthodox Christians in Kiberia have been burned and those displaced are seeking safety and shelter within the confine of St. George Cathedral compound. Several Orthodox priests have lost everything to fires set to their homes by angry mobs. Some are taking refuge at the seminary which has been temporarily closed.

FR. PAUL SCHNEIRLA, 92, was recently honored by SCOBA as the last surviving member of SCOBA's first organizers. He was its first General Secretary and has worked for 46 years for the unity of Orthodox Churches in America.

RESEARCH GUIDE TO UKRAINIAN AND CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN PAPER NEWSPAPERS, PERIODICALS, AND CALENDARS-ALMANACS ON MICROFILM (1886-1976) has been published by Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, 311 Anderson Library, 222 21st Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55455-0439. E-mail: ihrc@umm.edu or call 612/625-4800.

HOLY TRINITY MONASTERY AND SEMINARY in Jordanville is providing preservation, study of and access to archival treasures of the emigrants. Several mass emigrations of Russians and other Slavs have emigrated to the U.S. The archive is interested in any books or memorabilia you might have. Write to Archives, PO Box 36, Jordanville, NY 13361 or call for info 315/858-0945.

THE ANNUAL MASLENITSA for the benefit of St. Nicholas Cathedral (OCA) in Washington, DC and St. John the Baptist Cathedral (ROCOR) in Washington, DC was held in the Embassy of the Russian Federation.

IN 1947 LEMKOS living in Southern Poland were forcibly deported from their homes and resettled. Their homes were destroyed and all that remains of some of the villages is the faint outlines of buildings. Even the cemeteries were plowed over. Many observances were held by descendents of the deportation called the Vistula Operation (Akcja Wisla).

(Continued from front page)
ONE TIME ONLY

learns to interpret what the eyes see.

Another reason Jesus healed the man in stages may be that the blind man had a weakness of faith, which required the gradual awakening ... for as we read in 6:5-6, healing occurs according to one's faith. Yet, a little faith can be enough.

What lesson can we learn from this reading? Jesus deals with us individually, according to our needs and faith. This concern for the individual can be seen in the prayers of the church. Examples are: having to give your name at communion, names used at prayers for health and at panahidas, at marriage, chrismation, etc.

(Continued from front page)
ST. PANTELEIMON

may be granted mercy on the day of judgment."

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD AND THE LIFE TO COME

I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen

"In the Creed we confess that we expect the resurrection of the dead. Of course, when we say the resurrection of the dead, we mean the resurrection of bodies. Bodies, which are separated from the soul at death, will be resurrected, i.e. the soul at death, will be resurrected, i.e. the souls will return to their bodies and will give them life. The entire man should live eternally."

All bodies will be resurrected, those of the righteous and the unrighteous, saints and sinners alike. Thus, we can talk of the "restoration of nature," not, however, of the restoration of will. The gift of resurrection will be given to all men, the righteous will be given to all men, the righteous and unrighteous alike. Hence, everyone will be resurrected, but it is only the righteous who will be caught up "in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

(1 Thessalonians 4:17).

MADAME BABUSHKA

Dear M.B.: I had a birthday party a few weeks ago. My friends brought me a big beautiful cake. We only ate a very small bit of it because everyone seems to be on some kind of diet. Since the next day was Sunday, I decided to share it at coffee hour at our church. The hostesses for the day refused to serve my cake, saying they had enough other "stuff." Needless to say, I was hurt and angry. I threw the cake into the trash can. What do you think?

Dear Sophie: Congratulations on your birthday. May you have many more. As a babushka, I was horrified to think that food – your cake – was wasted. Shame on you for having had a hissy fit. However, the hostesses were also wrong. It's hard to believe that another contribution to the coffee table could not have been accommodated. They should have put it on the table. If they couldn't, for some reason, they could have put it into the freezer for a time when sweets are scarce. Madame thinks that they should have wished you Mnohaya Lyeta and let you share the cake.

* * * * * *

Because St. Paul's miracles had achieved such widespread fame, Jewish exorcists took to using the name of Jesus in the hope of getting similar dramatic results. But when Sceva's sons in Acts 19:13-19 invoked Jesus' name during an exorcism, the evil spirit reacted so violently that the sons "fled out of that house naked and wounded." This had a profound effect in Ephesus. Many magicians burned their magic scrolls and gave up their trade. Thus, God's superior power through St. Paul was emphasized, as was the fact that Jesus' name should not be used in magic incantations.

(Continued from page 23)
KITCHEN CORNER

stick) butter.

To construct stratas – place layer of bread pieces in each cup. Brush with melted butter. Spread mushrooms and asparagus over bread. Sprinkle each cup with part of 1 1/2 c. Gruyère cheese and cover with remaining bread. Brush with remaining butter. Pour over all with egg mixture, tilting muffin pan so that egg mixture is soaking all bread pieces. Sprinkle tops with remaining 1/2 c. of Gruyère cheese and Parmesan cheese. Cover and refrigerate overnight. When needed, bring to room temperature. Bake in 350° oven until puffed and golden, about 20-25 min. Remove from oven. Let stand for 5 min. before removing from tins. Makes. 10.

Suggestions: 1. Instead of mushrooms and asparagus, you could use cooked meat, spinach or other vegetable.

2. Make the stratas in individual Pyrex cups and bake as needed.

* * * * * *

St. Michael's Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of Binghamton, NY won the "2008 Capital of the Pierogy Pocket" award, sponsored by Mrs. T's Pierogies. Other contestants were from Buffalo, NY, Clifton, NJ, Lancaster, NY, and Whiting, Ind. 10,000 dollars was donated to CHOW, a food hunger outreach. For info www.pierogypocket.com.

WORLD WAR II'S IMPACT ON THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN ALEUTIAN/PRIBILOF ISLANDS

As a brief introduction, I was born on St. George Island, Alaska (Pribilofs) in 1948 to Protodeacon Perfenia and Evodokia Pletnikoff. I first learned of the terrible impact of World War II on the Aleut People from my father when I questioned him about his father, my grandfather, Eoff Pletnikoff. My grandfather died in Ketchikan, Alaska during the internment of the Aleut People in Southeast Alaska from the denial of medical attention for pneumonia. My father's description of the events leading up to the relocation of the people from Nikolski to Wards Cove and the death of his father impacted me significantly, I vowed to seek redress for the Aleut People for the damages caused them by our U.S. Government. Thus, began the work and effort by myself and others to seek repatriation and an apology from our government. The year was 1978.

The Aleut People were removed from the communities of Akutan, UnAlaska, Nikolski (on Umnak Island), Atka, St. Paul and St. George. The order for their removal was accomplished by an "Executive Order" signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The stated reason for the relocation was protection of the Aleuts because of the fear of the Japanese attack on the Aleutians. It was later discovered in official documents that the real reason for the relocation was because the Aleuts in appearance, resembled the Japanese and because of this, might sympathize or support the Japanese soldiers. When the order to evacuate the Aleuts from their homes came, very little notice was given by the authorities. The people were given short notice and only allowed to take with them, in many instances, one suitcase of personal belongings. The communities then were left to the U.S. Army. Homes and other buildings were utilized as the Army saw fit. Many of the people's personal belongings were stolen, many icons taken and homes ransacked. Our Orthodox churches suffered.

In Atka, the U.S. Army Aircorps used St. Nicholas Orthodox as a target for their bombing practices. The church was leveled. While the other churches in the other communities did not suffer total destruction, none of them were spared the indignity of misuse and desecration. The Army utilized some for general quarters to sleep and eat in, some were "rearranged" and utilized for Protestant Services. Holy icons were stolen, Holy vessels taken. This then was the fear the Aleut People had. Holy icons were stolen, Holy vessels taken. This then was the fear the Aleut People had. Although their lives and homes suffered, the people were most concerned about the welfare of their churches. The people wanted to protect and preserve their churches. The leaders in each of the communities sought assurances from the authorities that the church would not suffer.

In many communities, the people tried to take with them the Holy Icons and Holy Vessels utilized in the altar. Most were denied this request. Given this denial and the concern and fear the Aleut people had, many took to packing, the best they could, the icons and holy vessels. They then proceeded to seek out "safe" locations in the community. Holes were dug in the ground, and the icons and other church articles buried. Although I cannot verify this for myself, I have, on good authority, learned that during this relocation some of the lay church leaders wanted to remain in their villages to protect the church. Of course, this was denied.

After four years of internment in Southeast Alaska at places named Wards Cove, Killisno, Frunter Bay, Wrangell, in a strange environment and in abandoned fish processing plants without adequate heat, lack of family privacy, lack of clean water, and little or no medical attention, many Aleut People perished. The Aleuts, at war's end, were finally allowed to come home to the Aleutians and Pribilofs. Upon arrival to their homes, the Aleuts were greeted with the realizations of their worst fears about the manner in which their churches were treated by our soldiers. The people found their homes and personal property destroyed and vandalized. In most homes, all the icons belonging to the family from one generation to the next were stolen.

This experience of the Aleut People, citizens of this country, changed the culture, the environment almost completely. Our people have yet to fully recover from the trauma of this forced internment. Given this, and after understanding what my father told me about his experiences, I began the process to seek restitution from our government. It took almost four years of lobby work with our Congress in Washington, D.C. After Congress passed the World War II Repatriation Act, it was forwarded to President Carter for his signature and enactment into law. I was fortunate to be able to visit the White House and meet the president when he held the signing ceremonies. In effect, this act apologized to the Aleut People on behalf of the U.S. government. Included in his law were provisions to "repay" the people for private property destroyed or stolen by U.S. Military Forces. We also had a provision included in this law that addressed the damages to our churches.

The St. Nicholas Church in Atka was completely rebuilt. The churches in the other communities received funds to make repairs and complete holy icon restoration. This work is ongoing today as much work is required to restore properly the damaged icons, many of which were brought to Alaska prior to the sale of Alaska to the United States.

While the Aleut People accept graciously the apology of their government, this whole episode still hurts. We wonder why, as United States citizens, we had to endure such indignities and why did our government allow for the desegregation of our churches, our houses of worship. We take comfort in the fact that we should not, as a nation, ever allow such things to happen to anyone. Finally, we recognize that we are blessed. Our God has preserved us and our Church.

Patrick Pletnikoff of
St. George Island, Alaska

Memories

MY MOM, MARY

Many, many thoughts come to me as I quietly reminisce. Today, I'm remembering my beloved mom, Mary – a beautiful hardworking lady. Mom arrived at Ellis Island at the tender age of 12, coming from Austria, Hungary. Pop and Mom met and were married several years later. Living a simple life, my mom loved her garden, which she planted and cared for so very tenderly all summer long with a variety of vegetables – cucumbers, carrots, garlic, kohlrabi (turnips), onions, peppers, potatoes and red beets. Ok! I almost forgot cabbage that made such scrumptious halupki! I remember grumbling because it was so much work and I was a little girl and wanted to play. Come winter, boy did all those veggies taste good!

We had an old coal/wood stove down in our cellar where all these vegetables were cooked and preserved – stored on the shelves for future sampling. The last canning of the season was chow chow – my very favorite! Gathering all the last vegetables, we chopped all into a large pot. Mom added mustard, cloves, vinegar and water. All this marinated overnight. The next day came the cooking. As I now reminisce, I can almost savor the aroma that permeated the whole house!

I loved pickles and Mom pickled the best cucumbers – we had plenty of dill in our garden – it seeded itself from season to season.

As children do, we pulled up a carrot, wiped it in the green grass – the crunch and sweetness still stays in my memory!

During the canning season as I was grumbling about all the work, I remember Mom saying, "Someday Doinka (daughter), you will remember this all and you will smile." How true was her prophecy!

We also had a root cellar, where freshly dug up carrots, kohlrabi, potatoes and red beets were placed in the ground and covered with soil. In the winter, when we needed them, the vegetables were as fresh as a fall harvest.

My mom so loved her beautiful flowers, all colors, white, yellow, orange, red and purple – I remember teasing her about the mishmash, but she replied, "They all grow and bloom, don't they?"

We were allowed to pick the coal that the coal company rejected, so off we went with our wheelbarrows, brought the black anthracite home, cracked it and stored it in our coal bin. Hard work, sure, but how cozy it was, just to feel the warmth of an open oven!

Truly, Mom, you were a beautiful lady, devoutly religious, always thanking God for our abundant blessings! I know you are looking down upon me lovingly and resting peacefully with our Lord Jesus – I will bid you Vechnya Pamyat and Dostvedanya!

I Love You, Mom
Irene

Send your MEMORIES to Margaret Pysarchyk, 2125 Garfield St., Lorain, OH 44055 or email at mypysarchyk@hotmail.com

WINTER'S GRACE

When you are hurt because of some disappointment or because you are lonely, you are apt to feel sorry for yourself. But don't think you are alone in that reaction. Most everyone knows the bitter-sweet satisfaction self-pity can give.

Luckily, however, self-pity is a passing mood with most of us. We snap out of it because we want to resume living. We want to do things and be active again. We don't want to remain where self-pity put us: at the receiving end of sympathy.

Some people, however, don't see things that way. They seem to enjoy suffering and feeling sorry for themselves. Every discomfort or pain, physical or mental, is cherished and brought to the attention of others – so as to get their sympathy and concern, to keep others aware of their moral obligation, prevent them from doing all the things they'd like to do, and keep them from having a good time.

In short, some people develop self-pity into a fine art of chaining friends and relatives to themselves. And they don't seem to mind it if, in the process, they transform themselves into highly objectionable characters. But this is bound to happen when self-pity becomes a person's standard response to life.

The temptation to think that "no one has troubles like I do" or "no one appreciates me" comes to all of us. We may have a "pity party" for a short time but we have to direct our interests from the self to the outside – to things and people around us.

FUNDS

ALASKA AND MISSION: Pauline Heffernan

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PRESS: Irene Allen, Pauline Heffernan, Margaret Balog, Anne Dorozynski, Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Hvizd, Agnes Fryntzko, Anonymous, Ruth Larson/Helen Mackee, Marion Stenko in memory of her husband Paul.

* * * * * *

In our modern world the subject of proper dress for church is necessary even though the attitude that prevails seems to be: "It doesn't matter what I wear as long as I attend." This is not the mind of the church and is not in accordance with its teachings. Scripture tells us that dress must be modest. It must be appropriate out of respect for being in the presence of the Lord, His Saints and for others attending the service.

SOBORNOST

"Communal" People

The distinction between the "laity" and the "Christian people" calls for clarification. Every Christian believer who has entered into the mystery of the Church and is a member of the ecclesial community with the duties pertaining to such membership is considered as part of the Christian people. The laity are those who have not received, in addition to baptism, the ordination authorizing them to exercise ministry in the Church.

The active participation of the laity in the development of a synod in order that its decisions may be "orthodox" is primordial. This has often been lost sight of in speaking of the Church as a community of believers and again when the baptismal priesthood and the ministerial priesthood are set rather naively in mutual opposition.

Sobornost carefully distinguishes between these two different senses of one and the same word as to avoid all ambiguity: "the people" (*laos*) can signify either "the whole body," the "corpus christianum" with its articulated structure, or "the people" as distinguished from the clergy (priesthood), the ministry, the hierarchy. In the words of Bulgakov,

> The ancient fathers of the Church agree in rejecting any external organ, authority or mediation which is set above the Church rather than in the midst of the Church. In their view, the Church's infallibility cannot be that of a "separate organ" – of a council for example – but only the truth of the Church itself as lived by the whole body.

Only within the Church, within the continuous life of the Body, does the final discrimination between true and false take place. It is not the synods which do this, or any other official authority. The truth was not discovered by the synods, for it had never been lost. The fact is rather that in the synods it was once again acknowledged and solemnly proclaimed. And the value of these conciliar proclamations does not lie in their "ecumenical" character but specifically in their **catholicity**.

From the patristic standpoint, the ministrial priesthood is not outside the Church, but it is a service rendered to the whole Body of the Church. The episcopate is within the Church. The sacraments are the work of the whole Church in one individual, however unworthy. The mediation of the Theotuleds cannot be isolated from that of Christ, nor from that of the whole incarnation. Only Christ exists "above" the Church. Thus, again, the Encyclical Letter of the Eastern Patriarchs:

> Infallibility has resided only in the universality of the Church united by mutual love; and the invariability of doctrine as well as purity of worship were entrusted to the keeping not of any hierarchy but to that of the whole ecclesial people which is the Body of Christ. Among us it is the whole body of Christ which safeguards the religion, i.e. it is the people itself which seeks to preserve the faith intact.

Fr. Michael Dahulich, PhD
Dean of St. Tikhon's
Theology Seminary

ORTHODOX SITES

Our Life in Christ (www.ourlifeinchrist.com) brings you the Orthodox Christian faith as recorded in Scripture, taught and practiced by the early Fathers of the Church, and preserved within the spiritual life of the Orthodox Christian churches around the world. Program hosts Steven Robinson and Bill Gould record an hour of insightful discussion about Orthodox Christian faith and practice each week. Current and archived programs are available via the site as well as Ancient Faith Radio (www.ancientfaithradio.com).

Orthotracts.org is a place to find simple tools and support for those who want to grow in the Orthodox Christian faith. You will find music,

Undique (from everywhere)

The Gospel Book is always kept on the Altar Table. It is to be found in the middle of the Altar before the Tabernacle which contains the reserved Sacrament.

Both Old Testament and New Testament worship sought to reflect on earth the majesty of God as revealed from heaven. The services of the Orthodox Church made up of Bible quotes exemplify this.

For St. Paul, as well as for other New Testament writers, Christian teaching and preaching was synonymous with "delivering" to a new generation the Tradition which they had received. Hundreds of generations later, Orthodox Christians today are the guardians of that inheritance; the precious Gospel which is now entrusted to us. We have received it from those who came before us and we must preserve it for the future for those who follow us. It is a solemn and awesome responsibility. May we pray to be worthy of that sacred trust!

The fish was one of the earliest symbols used by Christians. The Greek noun for "fish" happens to be the acronym of the creedal phrase "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior." But did you know the rest of the story? There is more to this symbol than the letters.

In the ancient Near East, fish symbolized divine life. In museums you can see images of gods and goddesses shaped like fish. Perhaps this symbolizing occurred because of a sense that life came from the sea.

In the apocryphal story of Tobit, the angel Raphael heals Tobit's blindness with a fish. Jewish legend said that at the end of time, the main course at the messianic banquet would be the leviathan, that is, the evil fish-monster cut up and served for supper. (Ps 74:14)

Write the wrongs that are done to you in the sand, but write the good things that happen to you on a piece of marble. Let go of all emotions such as resentment and retaliation, which diminish you, and hold on to the emotions such as gratitude and joy, which increase you. Proverb

Editor's Notes



We live in a world where so many people are burdened by life. This modern age has many blessings and advantages, but it demands so much from us at the same time. So many people face difficult hardships. Some deal with them in the right way, but others simply seek an escape from pain. Because we're constantly reminded to care for the needs of those around us, many people do act in such loving ways that they do show genuine love for God in their actions. Are you aware of the needs of others, especially in your church family and act upon this or is your attitude "No one helped me, why should I help them?"

I am very fortunate in having two families – the one I was born into and my church family. It is difficult to express the sense of belonging I have. We greet each other with hugs and are truly glad to see each other and to pray together, lifting our voices to praise God for all He has given us. We share joy and sorrows but I do believe that what makes my church family so unique is that we accept each other as we are – with the idiosyncrasies which we all have. I do thank God for my church family and want to thank them for the unexpected gift they gave me on my birthday of a moleben.

All this joy is diminished by a concern for the unChristian attitude expressed by many on the internet concerning the problem besetting the central church administration. Certainly, questions can be asked, but personal attacks are uncalled for. This isn't something to put into a win or lose category. It has already lost too much. God show us the way!

God be with you,

Matushka Nina

BLESSING ONE ANOTHER

As Orthodox Christians, we invoke God's blessings on one another. As members of the royal priesthood, we should feel at home asking the Lord to protect and safeguard those whom He has given us. Parents in the domestic church customarily bless their children before they go to bed, when they start the day or leave the house for any reason. The usual procedure would be for the head of the household to trace the sign of the cross over the child's head while offering a prayer, such as "May God be gracious to us and bless us. May He cause His face to shine upon us and have mercy on us," or the like.

Another common time for blessings to be invoked is when someone in the family is sick. It is traditional in many places for the head of the household to read a portion of the gospel as a blessing over the sick person (Mark 5:25-34 and Luke 9:1-6 are most commonly read). The sick person is given a drink of holy water and sometimes a piece of antidoron (nafora) as well, and anointed with blessed oil. Some people also say a prayer such as the following:

O Holy Father, Heavenly Physician of our souls and bodies, who sent your only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to heal all of our ailments and deliver us from death: visit and heal your servant (say name), granting him/her release from pain and restoring him to full health and vigor, that he (she) may give thanks to You and bless Your holy name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.



Just about the time I got a request for a Strata recipe from a reader, I received one from Dr. John. His was more versatile than the usual one because it is made in muffin tins instead of in a baking dish. Stratas are egg dishes which are put together in the evening, placed in the refrigerator and baked the next morning. This is a perfect recipe to make when you are expecting visitors and don't know exactly when they are going to arrive. All you need to make a meal is to add a salad of greens and a light dessert to freshly-baked muffin stratas.

STRATA MUFFINS

8 large eggs
2 c. milk
2 teas. salt, divided
1 teas. dry mustard
1/2 c. unsalted butter, divided
1/2 lb. button mushrooms, sliced
1/2 teas. black pepper, divided
6 shakes tabasco sauce, as desired
1/2 lb. asparagus, cut into 1 inch pieces
1 loaf (1 lb.) white bread, remove crust, tear into small pieces
2 c. shredded Gruyère cheese
1/2 c. grated Parmesan cheese

Grease or spray ten standard-size muffin tins. In large bowl, mix eggs, milk, Tabasco sauce, 1 teas. salt and mustard. Set aside. Melt 2 Tbls. butter in large skillet, add mushrooms and cook for about 2 min. Sprinkle with 1/2 teas. salt and 1/4 teas. pepper and continue to cook until liquid has evaporated and mushrooms start to brown. Remove from skillet and set aside. In same skillet, add 2 Tbls. butter, add asparagus and sprinkle with 1/2 teas. salt and 1/2 teas. pepper. Cook asparagus until coated with butter and it just begins to soften. Set aside. Melt remaining 1/4 cup (1/2

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WASHINGTON'S PRAYER FOR THE NATION

"Almighty God, we make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection, that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at-large.

"And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation.

"Grant our supplications, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

(May we remember the day of independence of our country – July 4.)

LIGHTER MOMENT

A pedestrian is hit by a bus on a busy city street. "Somebody get me a priest," the man gasps.

Out of the crowd steps an elderly man. "I'm not a priest," he says, "but for 50 years I've lived behind St. Agnes Church and every night I overhear the services. Maybe I can be of some comfort."

The man kneels down next to the victim and says in a solemn voice, "B-14, I-19, N-38, G-54, O-72."



1. Romans 7:14-5:2
   Damian
2. Romans 8:2-13
   Juvenaly
3. Romans 8:22-27
   Hyacinth
4. Romans 9:6-19
   Symeon
5. Romans 3:25-4:3
   Lampadius
6. **Romans 5:1-11**
   Sisoes
7. Romans 9:18-23
   Kyriaki
8. Romans 10:11-11:1
   Prokopy
9. Romans 11:2-12
   Pancreaty
10. Romans 11:13-24
    Appolly
11. Romans 11:25-36
    Euphemia
12. Romans 6:11-17
    Proklos
13. **Romans 6:18-23**
    Stephen
14. Romans 12:4-21
    Aquila
15. Romans 14:9-18
    Julitta
16. Romans 15:7-16
    Julia
17. Romans 15:17-29
    Veronica
18. Romans 16:1-16
    Emilian
19. Romans 8:14-21
    Dios
20. **Romans 10:1-10**
    Elias
21. Romans 16:17-27
    Parteny
22. 1 Cor 1:1-9
    Markella
23. 1 Cor 2:9-3:8
    Phocas
24. 1 Cor 3:18-23
    Christina
25. 1 Cor 4:5-8
    Olympia
26. Romans 9:1-5
    Paraskeva
27. **Romans 12:6-14**
    Panteleimon
28. 1 Cor 5:9-6:11
    Nicanor
29. 1 Cor 6:20-7:12
    Kallinikks
30. 1 Cor 7:12-24
    Silvany
31. 1 Cor 7:21-35
    Joseph

BIBLE STUDY

This month many of the readings are taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans. Chapter 12 presents one of the finest summaries of Christian duties found in the Scripture. St. Paul bears in mind the pastoral issues facing the Christians in Rome in their attempts to live as Christians in their daily life.

In verses 12:6-14 he writes to them about the seven gifts which are given. We may receive one or more of them, but a church will benefit if there is someone holding office in the church who has these gifts. Some of the words have changed in meaning: Prophecy means to do public preaching of the faith. Ministry is especially meant for deacons but applies to all who work for the church. To teach applies not only to catechists but to school teachers, tutors and parents teaching their children. Exhort is a word which now means to comfort, for example, when we visit people in sickness or in sorrow. To give, do it cheerfully. Rule with care whether it is in the family, at work or in the parish. To show mercy or pity. But most of all, show by your conduct that you hate sin of all kind.

We are all integral and important parts of the church. We are functionally interrelated. We all contribute to the community Jesus founded. Are we doing our share? Which gifts were we blessed with?

LIGHTER MOMENT

The Old Testament was stressed this year in Sunday School. The 3rd, 4th and 5th graders were being questioned about some of the stories they had studied:

"Who was Samson?" A judge!
"Who was David?" A king!
"Who was Jeremiah?" A bullfrog!